Columbus O. Dec. 19. 1875.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 13th inst acknowledging receipt of my "Food of Birds is received.

It was my intention to have written you in acknowledgment of your "Observation of Birds of Ritchie Co. W.Va", but I only obtained your address from our friend Merriam a few days before sending my paper & was prevented from writing as I had intended at that time. A few words as to my paper and then a few words as to yours. In the first place I preparing a report on Ohio Birds at the request of our State Geologist to be incorporated as part of the Ohio Geological & Zoological Survey as soon as the Legislature shall make an appropriation for printing. In the prosecution of this work I desired to have something which might be used temporarily as a Check List of Ohio birds, which I could use in obtaining

with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that I read your paper, the regret being on account of your having anticipated my own notes in many instances, so that they do not read half so original to me as they once did. This is especially true of what you say of the notes of Turdus mustelinus; on account of which I have often blamed my unmusical ears because they did not go into ecstacies over its notes as have those of other writers. Your remarks concerning notes of Poliopila are good and except Maynard I believe you are the first to notice them. I have compared them to the low notes of the Robin when "singing to himself". You have not heard half of the notes of Loxophanes which possesses considerable mimicry and knows how to use it to advantage. Has also the singular habit of filling deep holes in trees &c with moss & rubbish, just for fun. And I have known them to fill a gas post.

Dend. Caerulea are equally common in woods

Wharton O. M.
Dec. 19-75

information. I was further offered a small pecuniary consideration for an article under the title I have given it. and though I did not much feel like devoting myself to the study of this subject for the sake of the Chick List I did so with the result you see. Please correct the List by the following additions. Turdus fuscescens (Printers omission) Picoides arcticus on authority of Baird B&R. Tantalus loculator, Cones Key & Birds of N.W. the latter I regard as? though I have been informed several years since on what I did not then deem sufficient authority that the bird had been taken in southern Ohio. Dr. Cones referred me to Kennicott in Pro. Boston Soc. as his authority for giving to Tantalus this range. I cannot procure this authority and would certainly be under many obligations if you would do so for me. If you have any authority other than B. B&R. for Picoides in Ohio

I should be very glad to learn of it or if you can give me any information respecting the birds marked rare I would be grateful and try to reciprocate by any means in my power. I find I have made a blunder in speaking (in the latter part of my paper) of as though. Conurus carolinus and Melospiza ~~[illegible]~~ Lincolnii did or ever had been known to breed in Ohio. To say how I came to make this mistake would not mend matters. I believe however that the general conclusion respecting the appearance or disappearance of certain species is correct.

Now for your paper. I am personally familiar in life and death with all the birds mentioned in your paper except two ~~three~~ ? Oporornis formosus, ~~Pyranga aestiva~~ and Ardea caerulea. I might say that I am intimately acquainted with all the others except Pyranga aestiva and Hylotomus. so that it was

with us. Had you seen it later you would probably have heard the "sweet and mellow notes", which I take to be only a modification of those you write. I give it song as a sort of whistling tune — taw-e — taw-e taw-e, chit chit chit, taw-e ——— chit, chit in-e. Contrary to Audubon I believe it builds only in high trees, but have never found its nest. Your ideas respecting the dark colors of Melospiza melodia are undoubtedly correct. The song of Cardinalis varies with individuals as much as does that of mocking birds and caged birds often sing better than wild ones. Myiarchus sometimes builds in bird-boxes with us. Chaetura sometimes builds in hollow-trees with us, probably because coal is used instead of wood and chimneys are built smaller than formerly. Progne nests often in trees. Tachycineta I have never known to nest otherwise, Stelgidopteryx as you describe, in fissures in stone quarries, on beams of bridges, & even in holes in the walls of brick or

suitable places on Stone buildings in the noisiest part of this city. The common note of Centurus is Chow, Chow as given by Wilson. The note which you heard seems to me to be what I call a modification of the type note of the family and resembles the note of the Flicker when suddenly disturbed. Melanerpes you would probably have found everywhere a few days later. Those you saw had probably remained in the woods through the winter, at least such is the case here where by far the greater number go south but a few remain in sheltered woods, those migrating returning in very considerable numbers about the middle of May.

I do not wish to bore you with more notes than will assure you of my appreciation of your work. And when my report is printed if it ever is I hope to make some return for the pleasure and profit with which

I have read the notes of my Eastern friends. I expect to advance a modification of the theory of variation according to latitude which I flatter myself will astonish those whom it does not convince

Very Truly
Yours
J. M. Wheaton

Wm Brewster
Cambridge, Mass.

P.S. Since concluding this letter I have recieved a letter from Mr. Henshaw informing me that he is by this time with you. Please say to him that, I have not been more fortunate during the past season than he has, but am packing a box for Washington in which I will send him such specimens as I have been able to procure of the bird he wished, and that he may expect to hear from me on his return to W-

sent of the parent, she having overdone herself, laying in season & out of season. This you may consider problematical — 2nd the loss of time to the chick by not being hatched sooner. Consequently at the time of its southern migration it is less able to undergo this effort (?) than birds which are say a month older. or if you chose according to ~~[illegible]~~ some it stands a poor chance under the law of the survival of this fittest. Now in the first instance it was an exceptional hatch & rarer on that account its chances of getting back in the spring were bad, and this ought if true to account for its rarity. Again if were a bird of extreme northern birth its season previous to migration would be shorter and in this way its developement retarded. Again you do not inform us as to the sex of your bird. Now while there is ~~do~~ no difference in color that I am aware of, depending on sex, in this family, yet in very many birds there is such a difference, in which case the male presents the highest developement, and we may consider that the

Columbus O. Mch. 15. 76

Dear Sir:

It is not often that I am obliged to confess that I do not know whether I have answered a letter, but am obliged to do so with regard to yours of Dec. 29. My confusion probably arose from a letter which I wrote Henshaw subsequent to the reception of yours. in which I reffered to a Tern which I saw in his possession in Washington 1874 in March, which I suppose was your specimen of ~~[illegible]~~ Portlandica. But as I read you letter over I am more and more convinced ~~of your~~ that is unanswered, for if it had been I should certainly have availed myself of your kind offer to look up Hunnicott in Proc. Philad. Acad. V. 1880, 391. on Tantalus in Ohio. I am almost sure the Cones is in Error & wrote "Ohio" for "North

t the Ohio" viz. S. Illinois. At the same time I had in 1860, doubtful authority for giving it as an Ohio bird. If you will refer to this I will be much obliged as I think I cannot find the work within 100 miles.

In regard to the voices of birds, you give me altogether too much credit for observation, for while I can and do detect most birds by their cry, yet it is rather by memory & experience than of sound if I may so express it. I have no natural adaptation for nor Education in Music. But my observation is good enough to make me wish that some one would undertake to show the affinities of birds by their notes and I have little doubt but that it could be successfully done and the field of developement (?) made wider thereby.

I have just recieved your expected article on L. Portlandica and ~~which~~ I must confess that I know nothing about Terns (having seen but one alive in the last 10 years) but I can perhaps as well as yourself appreciate & understand the reasoning by which you arrive at your conclusion. In fact I might say that some of my own pet theories have had their weaknesses strengthened & confidence restored by seeing how it looked when somebody else said it. To show that I understand it, or think I do, let me refer to the question which you ask — "Why are there black billed birds so rare?" and to which you give a conjecture answer, which is very good as far as it goes. It seems to me that what you have previously said (205-6) is quite as much of an answer as the one you give. Taking your note on page 205 as a starting point, let us suppose that your bird was hatched late in the season by a bird whose nest had been repeatedly robbed by "Eggers". There would then be two factors opposing its developement — 1st vital disability in the

Wilsons T. breeds in the Northern part of the state but not here. None of the others breed here, and I call all these Northern Birds. Now the Wood Thrush is of the same pattern as the other spotted thrushes (approximately) but the color of the spots is more intense & the spots are better defined. Moreover, the adult robin & blue bird are birds which present tolerably definite areas of color, but their young are spotted and we might say approximately of the same pattern of plumage as the spotted thrushes. Hence I say that northern birds are of the same pattern of plumage as the young of southern forms, and give this as one instance to prove it. I propose to present a paper on this subject to the Nuttall club, taking up the several patterns of plumage, streaked barred &c & treating these in the same manner. If I haven't bored you too much let me know what you think of it. Yours & J. M. Wheaton

Wheaton J. M.
Feb 15-1876

Compare [illegible] with Allen's law of [illegible] operation of species. I think you [illegible] see why his law were [illegible] to [illegible]

developement of the female both in pattern (e.g. Red winged black bird) or coloration (Purple Finch) or both has been normally retarded. So that should your bird prove to be a female it would thought exceptional come under this law & I know no reason why the law might not hold good exceptionally. If your bird was a male then I am no worse off than if I had said nothing about sex. But if the female shows evidence of retarded developement in consequence of late birth while the male does not, it will readily account for the bird not being twice as plenty as it is. I have paid some attention to these matters & think that they appeal to us in Ohio more forcibly than to you in Mass. I am of the opin[illegible] that under the head of retarded or prolonged developement come those instances with which you must be familiar, of ~~[illegible]~~ White throated

Sparrows streaked below & the tardy maturity of plumage of male purple finch as mentioned by Maynard or a more familiar example to me at least the Male redstart in the general colors of the female together with isolated or undeveloped black areas. We also see to a less degree here the same want of normal developement in male Scarlet tanager, Orchard Oriole, Male & female indigo and remarkably in Enepiza. (See suite of these birds sent Henshaw). So that should your bird be male it is not without precedent however we may be at a loss to account for it. Most of the birds I have mentioned are acknowledged to require more than one year for perfection or they are birds which raise more than one brood in a season, Sometimes, just as an old woman has whiskers and mustach a female oversteps her prescribed bounds in ornamentation. I have a female hooded warbler which I suspect much resembles in the pattern of abnormal black on her head your S. Portlandica

Please excuse length and style, When I set a-going I am very apt to get windy and didactic, not to say prosy. I shall not let you off however without getting you, if I can to give this matter of developement more attention. Let me give you an example by pushing the matter beyond individuals & varieties, I am fortunately for my argument on or rather near the boundary line between the Alleghanian & Carolinian fauna. Now if I take the typical thrushes and include with them the blue bird which I think can be done with less violence than to place Miminae with Turdus, I have the following birds Robin, Blue bird, Wood Thrush Wilsons Thrush, Swainsoni, pallasi, aliciae.

The Robin ~~Wood Thrush~~ & Blue Bird breed here so does the Wood thrush but has a more limited breeding distribution, I believe, than the others. As these birds breed here and to the south, I will call them southern birds

blossoms, under it a stump and log with old dead branches, weeds and brambles; on one side a wood pile and on the other a rail fence. At it I went and scratched and sweat and sweat and scratched, turned every thing over and pulled every thing up. Astonished every snail, centipede and earthworm in that corner of the universe and all the encouragement I got was the ceaseless scolding of the bird. Finally I concluded to walk around the thicket to take the kinks out of my back in doing which I found both old birds and six or seven young, the latter able to take reasonably good care of themselves. I made one observation which if confirmed may be an interesting fact. You have no doubt noticed that these birds present different shades of color some being bright chestnut, almost mahogany brown and other dull brown with a grayish cast.

Columbus, O, May 21, 1876

Dear Sir,

By way of apology for my delay in answering your esteemed favor of Apl 6, I have only to say that I have a portion of a letter written bearing date Apl 12, which I was obliged to lay aside, and when the collecting season came around my leasure time was all occupied as you well know. The "season" has not been a good one and is now about over for migrants. The only valuables I took were one mourning warbler and two vireo philadelphicus. The birds you want are still safe and will be taken with the nest and eggs I hope at least in the case of Euspiza and Emp. traillii. I cannot be so sure in the case of E. acadicus, as I am obliged to go a considerable distance for them. In regard to the other eggs it is not likely that I shall be able to procure any of the Raptores unless some of my few ornithological friends here should favor me. I do not know of

any one who can. Sciurus ludovicianus does not breed and is not found except rarely, after breeding, in this locality. I have a friend at school here who has friends at Yellow springs where the birds are abundant, and hope by this means to secure nests, but of this I am doubtful for on a visit to that locality last June I became almost convinced from the young birds they fed that their only business was to raise young Cow-birds. Hel. pina breeds in ~~swampy~~ wet places in upland Oak woodland about 15 miles from here and is not common there. Dend. caerulea — probably the notice in the Naturalist (?) or Addenda to B. B & R. is the only correct statement of their breeding habits. I know that they are to be found here in high woods with and without undergrowth and keep in the tops of trees, I do not think audubons statement that they breed in bushes can be correct. Last Sunday I heard a dozen singing but do not know that I caught sight of a single one. The nest & eggs I have never seen.

M. Mitratus — I have never taken but two specimens of this bird and do not think it breeds near me. Pyrrhuga aestiva is not found in this section — common about Cincinnati. For the rest I will do my best. Some I know I can send. I ought to explain to you that owing to the nature of my business I have not the time to make long excursions and have never paid the attention that I ought to the birds which do breed here. I do not get a half a mile from the city limits more than two or three times a year. But as our town is five miles long and three broad and its population variously estimated only at from 40 to 50.000 it follows that there are some good collecting grounds within these limits. I thought last Friday that I was certain to put my hands on the nest & eggs of Carolina Wren. I found a parent bird very anxious and a locality to my mind a perfect paradise for this bird, viz — on the edge of a blackberry tucket in woodland a drooping tree full of very fragrant

[illegible]

[illegible] I [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] depend upon age. One of these

[illegible] brighter [illegible]

[illegible] it looked as [illegible]

[illegible] summer [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] The young [illegible]

[illegible] shades [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Wheaton J. M.
May 21 - 1876

I also sent Cot. passerinus because it seemed lighter than yours, though ours become somewhat darker either during or after the breeding season. Please let me know the results of your comparison.

Dec. 16. Your card is duly received and my letter unfinished. I am glad you were pleased with the birds, and will try and send other specimens of Dend. albitora next season, and if you can add any more to your list of desiderata I wish you would do so

I have just seen a duck in the possession of Dr. Jasper which he calls Somateria but is uncertain of the species. But because it has a broad bill, a white spot below & behind the Eye, & a dusky whitish spot in front of the Eye with white speculum, color brown & shier below and the proper size & proportions I call it Melanella velvetina [illegible]. It was killed 20 miles from Columbus

Columbus, O. Dec 6th 76

My dear Brewster

I sent you by mail about 2 weeks since a box containing the following specimens

1 Yellow-throat Warbler var albitora. ♂. Columbus, O. Apl. 29. 76

1 [illegible] ♂. Columbus, O. [illegible]

1 Lark Finch Columbus O. May [illegible] 76 ♂

1 Fraine Flycatcher Juv.

1 [illegible] Flycatcher Juv.

1 Nest & Eggs 2, E. Fraine June [illegible] 1876

1 [illegible] June 8th 1876

1 Orchard Oriole Nest & Eggs June 7. 1874

I also enclosed my photo to correct any [illegible] impression which you may have received from the original. If possible I hope to receive yours in return.

Having got along so far on this page I will not take up room to make any apology for my delay, as in my opinion apologies are only an [illegible]

ning the past summer & fall I have had
volume for ornithology, and have added
but little to my collection or observations.
To my collection I have added the Blue Goose
& Baird's Sandpiper. I have take one poor specimen
of Cape May warbler. My ornithological friends
have done very little also. I hope however
to secure a few good birds this winter a
he weather seems now to indicate a cold
season. Shore Larks & Lapland Longspurs
have already made their appearance.
I was glad to see by the last Bulletin that
you made the acquaintance of the orange
Crowned warbler. I have taken two specimens
here and of course can appreciate the
pleasure of taking unexpected birds.
Did you ~~hear~~ hear any note from your birds
One of mine had an unusually loud
and emphatic note for even this genus
I note it as follows. Chicky tick, tick
tick tick. Much louder than the
note of H. [illegible], I [illegible] my attention
to the bird, and I can hear it still.

I was much pleased with Mr. Ridgway's
article on D. palmarum in the Bulletin, and
was not surprised to find he makes two
varieties. I have always been puzzled to
~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ conform our birds ~~with~~ to the descriptions
and have very few specimens because I have
been waiting to take them in what I consid
ered (from description) to be full plumage.
I have but one specimen in which the chestnut
predominates over the dusky in the streaks
and have none with uniform or even
continuous yellow below. I might here
notice the Cones in his "diagnostic marks
of certain warblers in any plumage" fails
with this bird as well as with "caerulescens
Two out of three of my specimens have the
three outer tail feathers [illegible] tipped, instead
of two, which he considered diagnostic, and
the female of caerulescens sometimes has no
white at the base of primaries.

I enclosed a lark finch because I thought
you might like to see the Ohio bird and because
I thought it larger than your specimens.

But he (Jasper) has an Erismatura that differs from any I have seen, being apparently larger & without any light fulvous superciliary line, and seems to differ in extension of feathers upon bill. He says he thinks that there is an European species to which it conforms. Do you know any thing of it? It certainly is not dominica, and may be the adult of rubida while all others I have seen are the young. E. rubida is on the whole the most abundant species brought to our market in fall.

Many thanks for you request to send my complete list of desiderata. It will do your soul good to see how many birds I have not got. Still I make it complete, big & little, enclosing in parentheses those species that I have seen here but do not possess. I have no doubt a great many of them are is much desired by you as by myself

Can you give me the present address of H.W. Henshaw & C. H. Merriam, I am afraid they have changed their habitat since I heard from them last.

I should be glad to renew my visit to Cambridge, ~~will~~ yet expect yourself and the ornithological club will be able to return my visit before I can call again. I only wish my ~~stay~~ visit might have been longer, since there is so little prospect of its recurrence.

My wife desires to present her regards, and to warn you to take care of yourself, though just how you are to do so she does not say — but I sincerely hope you do not need the advice.

Very truly

J. M. Wheaton

50 South 4th St

which he invoiced as [illegible] and [illegible] but afterwards corrected in Postal Card. He dates it Oct 21, but is as bright as I should suppose a Spring male could be, the head being black, some of the feathers faintly edged olive green. I am thus particular, as I think you would be in making any new exchanges, for I dislike anything which savors of looseness in matters of fact. With skins it does not make so much difference as in Eggs. But it does make a difference anyhow. Perhaps I should not have mentioned this but I thought that you might be glad to exchange with him if you knew anything of him I should like to know your opinion.

Our birds have been scarce this winter as well [illegible] Thrushes [illegible] Hawks [illegible] owls.

Columbus, O, February 5, 77

My dear Brewster

My acknowledgement of the reception of your box of birds has been postponed till now partly because I looked for your letter which came several days later and partly from press of business. The box arrived in excellent order and I was surprised as well as greatly pleased with the number and quality of specimens. Some of them such as the Black backed Gull I never expected to possess. You will hardly care to have me mention any particulars, but the sort of evidence set me at rest concerning Jasper's bird, which I had before any doubts, is now certainly P. fusca. For the Black headed Gull Turnstones & Sandpipers I am especially grateful and also Traill's flycatcher, which seems to be to bear out my theory!! in being more yellowish i.e. more like a young flycatcher than our other birds.

I was very glad to get the Picoides and shall make him do duty also in my theory by showing that he is the most northern woodpecker (ever found in Ohio) and at the same time the only one with yellow on crown, which latter marking however sometimes occurs in the young of some more southern species.

Now that I am so much in your debt I hope you will make your list of desiderata as full as I did mine. I cannot hope to furnish you with many new birds, if any, but I doubt not I could send some acceptable skins of young birds or females or specimens which you would like for comparison. I sent you on Saturday 3d inst. by mail a box containing eggs, as follows:

Kildeer plover 5 eggs. May 3. 1874. Fresh 6 miles N.E. Columbus

Cardinal Grosbeak 5 eggs. Nest on top of stump. June 10. 74 an unusual no of eggs. 3 is the common no.

Red Headed Woodpecker – Nest in dead ash. 15 feet from ground 5 eggs. 1/3 incubated, June 6. 1874. Columbus, O.

I hope to send you other of the nest & eggs you desire, as well as duplicates of those I have sent if you wish. Draw on me for anything you may want for your exchange & E. traillii acadicus &c. and if I can procure them you shall have them.

Do you know Geo H. Ready, Santa Cruz, California? He writes me that he has 200 sets of eggs (duplicates) of California birds. But as he has been collecting there 3 years, this seems to me to be a pretty high figure. I made a small exchange with him and got some eggs of Colaptes, Melospiza heermanii & Carpodacus frontalis, all of which I immediately traded off for the skin of ♀ Harelda, the only one to my knowledge, ever taken in the interior of this state; and as I had already the only ♂ I thought it a good trade. Harelda is not so very uncommon in winter on Lake Erie.

Ready also sent me three skins, Fringa alpina var americana, darker than any which I have ever seen here, perhaps because taken later than mine, (Nov. 9) and perhaps because a darker Pacific form. 2nd Melanerpes formicivorus ♀ which he had marked ♂. and 3d [illegible] Fronsendic

[illegible] a friend [illegible] one [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] O. during the holidays. [illegible]
in a woodshed and a hired man cut off [illegible]
[illegible] Meadow Larks and Doves
have remained all winter in small numbers, [illegible] [illegible] sometimes, [illegible]
I hear that from robins and blue birds have been seen.
A pair of Carolina Wrens has taken up their
[illegible] [illegible] in my garden. They are [illegible]
[illegible] visitors. By the way I took a specimen in
Nov. which was almost as brown as a robin beneath.
I am kept at home pretty closely now and will
be during the rest of the month by my duties at
the Medical College [illegible] [illegible]
immediately after that time to do some collecting.

I have spent a spare hour in studying
wings of our Whippoorwill & Night Hawk; did
[illegible] ever notice their primaries - like an owls
except that the vane of outer primary does not have
separated and recurved barbs, but the peculiarity
[illegible] upper surface of inner vane is even [illegible]

Wheaton Dr. J. M.
Feb 5 - 1877

strongly marked there in the owls. Have you any [illegible] except the [illegible] like [illegible] given to account for this structure. I do not [illegible] that has anything to do with the peculiar structure of the margin or upper surface of inner web. It must have something to do with keeping the several quills in apposition during flight, and [illegible] air from passing between the feathers in their ground and lofty tumblings.

By the way some writers, Audubon I think, [illegible] of a peculiar low cry made by the whip poor will when perched. I have never heard this note, for the bird is only found in my immediate [illegible] during the spring migration, but I [illegible] that this low note is not a note, but that the sound is produced by suddenly erecting and depressing the feathers somewhat in the manner of the strutting of a turkey cock. I have noticed that when wounded the bird opens its mouth as if to hip like a snake and quickly raises & depresses its feathers, which movement is accompanied by a soft low sound resembling "woof". Have [illegible] [illegible] I think something of this sort is said of the night hawk but I have never noticed it.

I am quite certain that [illegible] Erismatura is not [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] for examination

Yours
J. M. Wheaton

Columbus O. June 15th 1877

My dear Brewster

I learn that you are safe back from your Florida trip and that you are well laden with good and valuable specimens. I congratulate you, perhaps all the more because of my own bad luck during this season. In fact but for a few circumstances I should hardly have known that we had a season here. The weather has been exceedingly fickle and during March Apl. & May was either unseasonably hot or unreasonably cold. Consequently the migrants which had been walled up south of me by cold weather, passed by me in the night, I suppose, the first warm days in May, I captured but 4 species of Sylvicoldae not known to breed here, the peculiarities of weather at migrating time seem to have affected the relative abundance of some of the summer residents; for instance I have not seen an Orchard Oriole since the migration was over and but one Chondestes. I find no Yellow throated warblers remaining to breed, and Empidonax acadicus is not nearly so numerous as usual & I have as yet taken over two eggs. E. Traillii has deserted its favorite breeding places here and when I last year found 9 nests in one afternoon, I was only able to find one in a search of 3 half days and I fear this one ~~was~~ is deserted. Nor have I been able to find a nest of the Rough winged Swallow. I have secured for you a fine nest & 4 eggs of Euspiza which I will forward as soon as I can find something which I think will be acceptable to pack with it. I have been especially disappointed in my expectations of sending you nest & eggs of Carolina Wren. I found a nest in an old frame house, but while waiting for eggs, carpenters commenced

Wheaton J. M.
June 15 - 77

remains of the house and the birds deserted, I was fortunate enough to find a nest of Poleoptila caerulea constructing. It was about 40 feet from the ground on the horizontal limb of an ash. I watched it carefully although it was between 3 & 4 miles from home. Going to the woods one morning I saw something fall from a tree before I was near enough to recognise the exact ~~locality~~ locality. There was a tolerable high wind and there were several jays about. To my disgust it proved to be the nest which I had already dedicated to you. I picked up and will send though somewhat torn. I found no remains of the Eggs if any. Think I can send the empty nest of Carolina Wren if you desire it. This brings me to my special object in writing at this time, which is to enclose a letter from Ed. W. Cone to my friend Chas J. Orton now in Clear Lake, Minnesota and by him forwarded to me. I wrote to Cone telling him that I had no doubt the unknown nests were those of Blue Gray Gnatcatcher and telling him that I thought you would like to make a trade with him for one. He is in an excellent locality, Yellow Springs Green Co. O, for Trailles & Acadian Flycatches, Blue Warblers & Large billed Water Thrush also Carolina Wren, Orchard Oriole, Chondestes, Mycarchus crinitus, & Redhead Woodpicker. I do not doubt you can arrange a profitable correspondence if you wish, there are several Eggologists there.

In regard to Porphyrio martinica my correspondent at Cincinnati, Frank W. Langdon, gives me reliable information of four (4) specimens of this bird taken in the vicinity of Cincinnati the past spring. I asked him to send notes of them to the Bulletin but he said he was afraid it would look as though Ohio wanted to monopolize that number.

Yours truly

J. M. Wheaton

P.S. at what date does Actiturus nest with you. I cant find their nests nor those of the Yellow winged Sparrow though the latter is abundant here.

Wheaton J. M.
Feb. 1878

Columbus O. Feby 4, 1878

My dear Brewster

I send you by mail today box containing Nest and 4 eggs of Black-throat Bunting. June 15, 1877. Eggs pale — nest in top of weed in clover field 18 inches from the ground. The nest is the most artistic, I think, I have ever seen by this bird.

Also nest of Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, a poor affair, torn from a limb by jays while I was watching it, in hopes to secure the Eggs for you. I send it simply to help fill the box, and thinking that some one of your acquaintance may be glad to have even a poor specimen. I also put in a skin of young Loggerhead, Black-throat Bunting and Lark Finch (Chondestes), the two latter in nestling plumage, the former just able to fly. I thought they might interest you, and might be seen

to your collection. I was much pleased with your article on infantile plumage in the last Bulletin. If you will compare the young Bkthroat Bunting with the young Bobolink of the same age, I think you will find a striking resemblance, the most notable difference that I notice, aside from size, is the lighter wing coverts of the Bobolink. I have always considered the black throat ~~throat~~ as the connecting link between Fringillidae and Icteridae, so far as Ohio Birds are concerned. ~~They~~ It resembles the Bobolink in habits especially in the breeding season the males pursuing the female and singing on the wing, while the nest is more like that of the Bobolink & orioles in structure than like the average of sparrows.

The Lark finch appears to me to be quite strongly marked for the young of one of the plain colored sparrows. I think its tail feathers alone characteristic (white with black shaft streak on many).

I do not know why I have not sent them before unless I thought them hardly worth sending or that I was waiting for another letter from you, having recieved one from you since my two last.

Neither have I ever recieved your photo which you promised long ago. I hope you will excuse this gentle reminder for I really want it.

My prospects for collecting this spring are not very good, my time being pretty much occupied otherwise. I hope to get to Washington for a few days either this month or next, if so it will be the first time I have been out of town over night since I saw you. I am now at work on my report on Ohio Birds which is wanted on the 15th inst. but I have little hopes of its being printed under 18 months if ever. Regards to Boston friends

Yours

E. M. Wheaton

Columbus, O. Apl 30. 1878

My Dear Brewster

If a long letter on foolscap will in any way atone for my long delay in answering your welcome letter of Feby. 25 I will try and write if I can find the ideas. I have been very busy professionally from the time you wrote until about a week since. So I have but little of ornithological news. The latter part of February I went to Washington for a few days and there met Messrs. Henshaw Ridgway, Dr Yarrow & Mr Jouy and others. I enjoyed my visit hugely but would have liked to have stayed longer and not been so hurried. Since that time I have done nothing worth mentioning in the way of collecting and up to the middle of Apl. my collections &c. amounted to a pair of Mallards, pair of Barn Owls from Illinois (sent in the flesh, and a fine specimen of Goshawk from Minnesota, recently skinned. I have no specimen to compare it with but think it should be, from description var Stridulus of Nuttall really is such a variety.

On the recommendation of Mr. Henshaw I invested a very small sum in bird skins with Mr. Allen of Nicasio, California, a correspondent of yours as I see by the Bulletin, and was much pleased with the return. Mr. Henshaw had presented me with a specimen of his Selasphorus allenii while down in Washington and the possession of the bird renewed my interest in his articles and that of D. G. Elliott. Judging from the articles alone, Mr. Henshaw seems to have carried his point, and is fairly entitled to all he claims, though I certainly should have no objection to Mr. Elliott's having his own way about naming the other bird "Henshawi".

Our season commenced early this year, the Yellow throat Warbler arrived before the middle of the month and its migration is about over. About all the sylvicolidae breeding here have arrived, but few of those which go further north to breed, such as D. coronata, have been seen.

It seems to be a rule in this vicinity that the first birds to appear are the ones which breed, those which are only migrant follow; the principal exceptions are Surnias pallasi & Parsonella among the "migrants" which usually appear before the "summer residents" of their respective families, and Bobolinks and Black throat buntings and perhaps Indigo Birds which usually arrive later than the "migrants" Black throat buntings have made their appearance within a few days white doves robins song ~~sparrows~~ ~~pewees~~ sparrows and Loggerheads are breeding.

I found this spring what I have for several years looked for in vain a locality for Large billed Water-thrushes. This is twelve miles north of this city in a couple of slate ravines, just the paradise for birds who want to wade up to their knees and wag their tails without obstruction. The spot I have been familiar with in early boyhood but have not visited it lately. I went there last Thursday and secured five of the birds out of eight seen, which I considered doing pretty well considering the circumstances. I had at ~~one~~ times within gun shot ~~some~~ a worm eating warbler a company of Carolina titmice (3 or 4) a pair of L. B. Water thrushes, a pair of Blue warblers, a yellow throat warbler while over my head in a tall sycamore a pair of Blue Gray Gnatcatchers were building, and the song of the Lark finch on the top of the ravine on plains heard. I was in a quandary what to shoot at but as the Worm eating warbler seemed just then most desirable, I tried for him until I failed. My four homes in the ravine secured me in addition to the water thrush a yellow throat warbler, a worm eating warbler, pair of blue warblers, sum of Lark Finches with five or six less characteristic birds, all of which I got good skins of. Three of these Water thrushes were male and two female, the females were noticeably larger than the males, both in general appearance and especially in bill and they were much more decidedly typical Ludovicianus than the males, which were more sharply streaked. None had as well defined unimaculate throat as some specimens I have seen, though all had white superciliary lines and were not to be confounded with the small billed Water thrushes a moment. The females had the under tail coverts with quite a creamy brown ~~color~~ wash

What a singular habit that is of wagging the tail. Sometimes I think it a long lived aquatic heredity descending through the lower genera of certain groups from the Titlark through the water ousel and Golden crowned thrush to the pewees and thence to the Sandpipers and thence to the ducks when it becomes a horizontal wag - and the question why they do it is as pertinent as the answer regarding the dog - because the tail cant wag the body. But I must stop my own foolishness and run to your letter. You say you will remain in St Marys until May, and I must try and make this letter reach. I learned from Mr Ridgway & Hanshaw that you expected to do some collecting in Mt Carmel this summer & that you would probably go up the Mississippi Valley. I shall try and make this letter reach you by the same route. I am glad you are pleased with the birds and nest I sent, though I suppose you will have an opportunity of collecting the same for yourself before the season is over. I have never seen C. ludovicianus catch flies as you relate, but their actions often remind me of the redheaded Woodpecker, in the way they fly down to the ground

for their food. But I saw this morning something which I think would have interested you — a caged robin — reared from the nest which imitated the sparrow hawk and Chat as well as a mocking bird could, it also imitated numerous other birds but I mention these because the bird could not have heard them but learned the notes from a mocking bird.

How I wish I could spend a few days with you either in Georgia or Virginia. My own observations are confined to this immediate locality and I envy you the chance of securing Vireosa, Protonotaria and the other birds of your locality. If in Illinois please notice if Empidonax acadicus and Traillii both frequent the same woods as stated. I can hardly think this possible having never met acadicus on bottomland timber but once, and have never seen Traillii in woodland.

Now I have almost finished and want to say this much more, I want very much to have you make me a visit on your way home from Illinois and if I knew when you expected to leave there I would know much better what to promise in return for your presence. Am expecting an interesting event in our family by the middle or latter June and that prevents me from saying positively what I can do to make it pleasant or profitable any time you may drop in upon us, but we keep open house for ornithologists and their wives, (permit me to congratulate you on having one) and are always glad to see them. I am much obliged for the photo but hope to hear from and see the original soon. So if I am able forgive my long delay and answer soon you will much oblig — Truly Your friend

J. M. Wheaton

Wheaton J. M.
July 12-1878

Many thanks for your kind offer of a specimen of Prothonotary and Kentucky warbler. The latter I have, and have the offer of a pair from my friend Langdon of Cincinnati, so I gratefully decline, but the Prothonotary I shall be delighted to get if you still have a duplicate to spare. It and Kirtlandi are the only birds of the family with us of which I have no specimens, Some day I may send you a specimen of Kirtlandi — who knows?

I cannot help thinking what a splendid layout your 47 skins of Prothonotary make, to say nothing of the others. The funeral of all the Orangemen in Montreal could not be more magnificent. I hope it is not too late for me to do a little collecting in the way of young birds. Should I be able to get any thing good in that line you will hear from me, am much interested in your Bulletin articles. Yours

J. M. Wheaton

Your letter is not half answered but this will have to go — and besides it might be more interesting to me to comment on your Ills. birds than for you to read. I found this summer Traillie & acadicus in the same woods. The former in swamps, the latter in dry places.

Columbus, O. July 12, 1878

Dear Brewster

Your letter was received a few days ago and was indeed welcome and has been reread several times. I was much chagrined to find that but for delay on my part you might have paid me a visit. In your former letter from St Marys you stated you would remain there until May 1. I supposed you would not reach Ills. at least till about May 10, & expected you would remain at least till June 1st. But it seems you left Mt Carmel about May 10th which I think was the day my letter was remailed to you it having been returned to me from St Marys. Well I will try and bear my loss patiently for I cannot help thinking that after such a surfeit of good collecting as you had with Ridgway it would have been an intolerable one to have remained even two or three days with me. Perhaps another season when you want

some tamer sport than alligators and prothonotaries, you may may be induced to visit me and fill you bag with Redheaded Woodpeckers E. acadicus, Dend. caerulea and such other birds as Chondestes & Euspiza. I am doing good to find the nests of Chondestes, Euspiza an E. acadicus for yourself. I have been obliged to leave my Sturns motacilla and Helmutherus to raise their broods in peace and have done no collecting since I wrote you except to secure a nest and Eggs of E. acadicus for R. Deane. Neither have I been able to secure any thing new or rare of others collecting excepting a single male Cuvierostra americana killed out of a flock of 8 or 10 in this City June 18th.

Yet I have a unique nondescript to report, the same fellow which I mentioned I was looking for. His exact classification is not exactly made out and for the present he is provisionally labeled Whealonius Juv. ♂. June 21, 1878. I rather think he will have to go amongst the Caprimulgidae as his note is heard principally at night like the Whippoorwill and like birds of that family he has a very small mouth when it is shut and a very large one when it is open, Moreover the Etymology of the family name suggests habits which seem to have an analogy in his own. But really we have had pretty serious times during the last month and your letter came just in time to be enjoyed by the whole family, when our hopes for the future seemed brighter than for several days. I read it to my wife and I do not know but she enjoyed your description of your trip on the Ochlawaha river better than I. We were of course peculiarly interested in learning of the happy state of affairs in Mr. Allens family and I am cautioned by my wife not to fail to ask you to present our congratulations to them.

P.S. Prof. Newberry has written to know if I will superintend the passage through the press of the Zoological volume of Ohio Geolog. Survey, Report, so that it appears my report on Ohio Bird may be printed this year.

Columbus, Ohio, Octo 29, 1878

Dear Brewster:

After begging your pardon for not acknowledging the receipt of the pair of Protonotarias, I can only add that I was so much struck with their beauty that I did not know what to say and have been trying hard ever since. I have had no time for collecting since last April and hence have little to offer in the way of ornithological news. What I have to say I hope will make up in quality what it lacks in quantity or vice versa.

First; I have hoped that you would in each letter inform me what I could do for you in the way of specimens from the locality — at the same time fearing that your requisition would find me empty handed and unable for the present to make collections, I have taken great interest in your descriptions of young & first plumage. And have wondered why you have not described more birds than you have. My memorandums which I enclose show that you omit any description of sixteen (16) birds believed to breed in Ohio which are more or less completely described in Bard Brewer & Ridgway's work, and also that you omit any description of Sitta carolinensis, Poocetes gramineus, Dolichonyx oryzivorus, Cyanurus cristatus, Antrostomus vociferus and Coccyzus americanus the young of which are not described by B. B & R. and yet the birds breed with you as well as here. The following birds breed here which you have not described Parus carolinensis, Dend. dominica var albilora, Sinrus motacilla, Myiodioites mitratus, Euspiza americana, Icterus spurius ~~and~~ Quiscalus var. aeneus and Cardinalis virginianus. Of these two lists of birds not described in young or first plumage I have seen the young of all except Sinrus and Antrostomus, and have now on hand skins of either young or 1st plumage of Parus carolinensis, Euspiza americana

Poveceles gramineus, Dolichonyx oryzivorus and Myiodioctes mitratus — the latter a young bird (August 22 I think), Dolichonyx & Poveceles are in 1st plumage, Tarus & Euspiza young of the year. Any or all of these are at your disposal and I sincerely hope you will want them. I have not forgotten that you wish young of Empidonax acadicus but could not get out for them this year. If you will name any other birds old or young that you wish from this vicinity I will try and obtain them in their season. There is a matter concerning which I wish to expose my ignorance and obtain information:— All descriptions which I remember to have seen of the Tanagers (aestiva and rubra) describe the mottled birds as being invariably young males, and the young of the Rosebreasted Grosbeak are described as resembling the female with the rose color under the wing and traces of it on the breast. Now it happens that I never saw ~~or~~ either of these birds in the full male plumage in the fall which suggests to me that the young male birds may have no red until the second year and that the particolored birds may be old males returning to the plumage of the female as is the case of the Bobolink and Yellow bird. I am tolerably sure that Euspiza looses its black throat in the fall. The Indigo Bird may be another instance where the old male in fall has been mistaken for the young acquiring his blue coat. It seems to me likely that my suspicions regarding these birds will prove true with regard to some of them. On the other hand Myiodioctes mitratus which is here usually abundant in the fall, has a more extensive and brighter black ~~patch~~ crown than in spring and and is altogether the finer bird at that time. The individuals without black on the head are so few that I cannot believe that this is the ~~plumage~~ characteristic of the young as described. Again with regard to M. canadensis I see you and Mr. Ridgway differ as to the plumage of the young in autumn and so far as I can judge, you are right. M. canadensis I have never seen in the fall and it is barely common with us in spring. Still I have a spring bird in which the spots across the breast are obsolete. It is an individuality. —— Now with regard to Sitta Canadensis, you mortify me. This bird usually appears singly and incompany with its relatives or with blue birds on their migrations, but in the spring of 1873, May 10, I found them in a large flock accompanying a large flock of redstarts, none of the latter in adult male plumage. I killed several of the Sittas more than I could care for, and as I desired only full plumaged birds I threw away one each ♂ & ♀ which had no chestnut but were ashy white below. This is the only time I have seen birds without chestnut and I presume these were birds which had been delayed by the late season, which would account for their appearing in large flocks & in breeding plumage. Strangely enough a writer in the last Bulletin mentions that they line their nest with the red feathers from their breast, which suggests a perplexity.

I have made very few additions to my collection since I wrote you. Your prothonotaries are almost the most important addition. Still I might mention a Red crossbill June 21, killed out of a flock of 6 or 8 within the city limits; and last, Aug 22, though not least a Swallow tailed Hawk — killed within 18 miles of this city.

I think I will make a note of this capture and some interesting features attending it and forward to Mr Allen for publication if he sees fit. Though formerly (40 years ago) not uncommon in this state there is no record of its occurrence in the last 20 years. Have just received a note from J. W. Shorten taxidermist at Cincinnati in which he says he has just received a fresh specimen of Colaptes auratus adult with red predominating in in the ~~plum~~ black mustachoes.

J. M. Wheaton
Oct. 29 1

Has any one contradicted ~~the~~ Dr. Brewer's note on the Crested Grebe in the Bulletin apl. 1878. If not I think I will try it, if only to ask him why he publishes, as news, ~~information~~ that which he says is now ~~universally~~ ~~generally~~ conceded". I think I can bring tolerably authentic evidence of five birds, bona fide crested grebes, three of which were taken in Ohio. One from Newfoundland is now before me in spring plumage. & I have the red necked grebe to compare it with. I do not see how any one could mistake the one for the other at any season, judging from these specimens, a blind man ought to distinguish between them by difference of structure. It seems to me that Dr. Brewer puts Dr. Jones in the very unpleasant position of virtually saying that he does not know a young red necked grebe from a crested Grebe. I have sent for a crested grebe in spring plumage from Dacotah. I hope to get it together with the head & leg of one killed in this vicinity 3 weeks since by a competent observer who did not preserve the specimen. Then unless some one authoritatively tells me I will fire a charge at Dr. Brewer at short range. It is getting hard to prove an alibi for any bird and if things turn out as I hope and expect, I shall have the pleasure of restoring still another European Bird to its former place in our American list. But I must close before I become too enthusiastic.

Has Mr. Kinshaw returned to Washington from Oregon?

Yours truly

J. M. Wheaton

List of Birds more or less commonly observed by B. B. & R. in the plumage of young & not described by Nuttall

Fuligula marila
Mareca penelope
Melanitta perspicillata
Erismatura rubida
" leucocephala
Lophodytes cucullatus
Branta canadensis
Bucephala albeola
Clangula glaucionetta
Anas obscura
Chaulelasmus streperus
Dafila acuta
Querquedula carolinensis
Mareca americana
Anas boschas
Aythya marila
Aythya affinis
Aythya vallisneria
Aythya americana
Nyroca valisineria
Nyroca marila
Nyroca affinis
Nyroca collaris
Clangula hyemalis
Somateria mollissima
Oidemia americana
Oidemia perspicillata
Oidemia deglandi
Oidemia fusca
Histrionicus minutus
Harelda glacialis
Mergus serrator
Mergus merganser
Mergus cucullatus
Lophodytes cucullatus
Colymbus arcticus
Colymbus septentrionalis
Podilymbus podiceps
Podilymbus podiceps var. antillarum
Podiceps cornutus
Podiceps auritus
Podiceps nigricollis
Podiceps rubricollis
Podiceps occidentalis
Podiceps californicus
Podiceps dominicus
Podiceps cristatus
Podiceps cristatus var. longipennis
Podiceps cristatus var. longipennis
Podiceps cristatus var. longipennis

protected by the bobolinks. I was well prepared for the mistake. In my theories their young ought to resemble each other more than the parents did, and I was delighted to find that the only difference was in the presumed length and size of tarsus and feet.(?) But enough of this. Don't send me the young birds. Wait and see if I can send you skin of young bobolink next season. My belief that they breed here is not shaken.

I have little time now to devote to birds though I should like much to make some collections. Our winter promises well for northern specimens, if severity will bring them. I have made one addition to my collection, the first of the species I have ever seen or heard of in this vicinity. You will be surprised to hear that it ~~was~~ is Nyctale acadica. It was found frozen in a garden of the city. Bulletin got my Cupidonia 1868. Should have been 1878. Figures will lie sometimes. Can't possibly put down any more ideas to-night. Am correcting proof of Report on Mammals of Ohio by A. W. Brayton, lecturing on Anatomy four times a week. Wife is sick, and baby teething. Please write soon.

Yours
J. M. Wheaton

J. M. Wheaton
Jan. 19, 1879

Columbus, O. Jany 19, 1879

My dear Brewster

If I had obeyed my first impulse you would have ~~answered~~ had an answer within twenty four hours from the reception of your first letter, which reached me in company with the January Bulletin. I read the letter rather hastily and turned to the Bulletin with the impression, derived from your letter that I should find your description of my Dolichonyx. My own mortification I imagined to be only equalled by yours, and I imagined you to be like a man who can't swim seeing his friend drown before his eyes, or yourself the friend whom I had pushed in — just for fun as it were. You can perhaps imagine how relieved I felt to see that my Dolichonyx was not in print. I am very sorry and much mortified that I should have been the cause of so much trouble, and ~~only~~ myself through

your care only reaping the benefits. When I read your letter the second time I saw how it was. I will try and not do so any more. And now for a clear statement of the case. I have never paid <u>much</u> attention to <u>young</u> birds, but have paid considerable attention to both Black-throat Buntings and Bobolinks. To the first because they are birds which my correspondents and ornithological friends generally know but little of, and because I find them a very interesting study. I have also studied the Bobolinks because they are new arrivals(?) so far as all observation goes, to this vicinity. The first I ever saw, I killed in 1857, there were a pair of males in spring plumage, perched in a tree on the edge of a stream, in woodland. About 1860, they began to appear in low meadows about the city. In 1874 I was surprised to find some remaining during the breeding season. I was aware that Brewer ~~stated~~ gave a higher latitude as the southern limit of their breeding range, and was much interested in finding their young which I did in 1874. These were little fellows not fledged and according to my present recollection much darker than the specimen I sent you. (about the median line I do not remember) About this time I noticed that the Black-throat buntings have when mating much the same habits as the bobolinks — the males arriving several days before the females, and when the latter appear chasing them about the fields and singing on the wing &c. Besides the smooth, compact plumage of the Black throat seemed to me to be more like the plumage of Tetenidae than Fringillidae and I liked to draw comparison between them and the Sparrows on one hand and Tetenidae on the other until I began to consider and still do consider this bird as a connecting link between the two families. So you see when I found the "orphaned bird"

Dr. Wheaton

Jan. 26, 1883

think I can show by specimens in my collection that we have in the west both M. grisens and M. colopuccus, and that they are not longitudinal variations as intimated by Mr. Ridgway. As soon as I can find his paper on this subject I will let you know about it.

Yours truly

J. M. Wheaton

Wm Brewster

61 Sparks St

Cambridge

Mass.

P.S. I have to thank you for furnishing so much interesting matter for the report

P.P.S. As I cannot lay my hand on the loose title page, I enclose the entire volume, & the package has been delayed till I could get it

Columbus, Ohio. Jany 26/83

My dear Brewster

I take pleasure in sending to your address for the members of the Nuttall Club, copies of my Report on Ohio Birds, which has been so long delayed. When the club next meets at your house, as I suppose and hope it still does, will you please distribute them with my compliments. I should very much like to hear from you, Mr. Allen and Mr. Purdie, who are the only ones of your active membership whom I have met, your opinion of the same. I have not had time to read it since it was printed (1879-81) and have an idea that I might find some things new and interesting to myself.

I also enclose 4$ for your

Treasurer. I very foolishly and carelessly forgot to remit my subscription for 1882. I wish he would send me April, July and October numbers for 1882 (I have January no.) and put me down on the list for 1883.

I suppose the report will be reviewed in the Bulletin. I would be glad if it were done by yourself or Prof. Allen. In the copy with this letter I have turned down some pages which to me appeared to contain something new or interesting ~~to me~~, at one time, but now I suppose most of my ideas that are at all tenable have become common property: for instance my remarks on the Black-throated Bunting were printed in winter of 79-80, but Mr. Ridgway, very summarily disposes of the whole business by placing this sparrow next to the Icteridae. In regard to my essay on pattern and Coloration, I am now rather inclined to think that I have been more favorably situated for ~~the~~ such a theory than most ornithologists yet think there is some truth in it. I would have developed it farther had I not hoped that you would amplify as regards the woodpeckers, and that Mr. Rigway might as regards Falconidae; in both families I think interesting observations might be made.

I enclose with this copy, title page of the volume.

I have a few notes of occurrences of birds in Ohio which may be interesting to readers of the Bulletin - 2 Specimens of avocet. - unseasonable occurrence of two or three species, &c, which I will try and send in a few days. Also I